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Advocate of Peace.

VOL. LXIX.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1907.

No. 4

THE AMERICAN PEACE SOCIETY,
PUBLISHERS,
31 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

MONTHLY, ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR. TEN CENTS PER COPY
Entered at the Boston Post Office as Second Class Matter.

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The Hague Conference.

The situation in regard to the Hague Conference has not materially changed since our last issue. It is expected to meet early in June, as the Netherlands government has announced that it will be ready to welcome the delegates at that time.

Russia has so far hinted at no change in the rather meagre and disappointing program which she published last summer. But it is becoming increasingly certain that the Conference will not be permitted, at the wish of one or two powers, to dodge the question of limitation of armaments. This subject is now, really for the first time, being thoroughly studied and discussed throughout the civilized world. That means much. The public intelligence and conscience have at last taken hold of the problem in a way that will compel early action upon it. There is no doubt that a great majority of the governments, Great Britain, the United States, Italy, France, Spain, and all the smaller powers, wish to see the question squarely tackled, and will throw their weight at The Hague into that scale.

The British government has not weakened in the least in its determination to have the subject considered, as clearly appears from the Prime Minister's article in *The Nation*, the new Liberal weekly, which

we reprint in full on another page, and to which we invite the special attention of our readers.

Mr. Bartholdt's report to the President, on behalf of the Interparliamentary Group in Congress, we also print in full, as this statement sets forth the powerful influence which this great body of statesmen in different countries is exerting to make the Conference at The Hague all that our civilization demands that it should be. It is a large program which the Interparliamentary Union has drawn, speaking of it in general, but it is not larger than the present advanced state of the world and of international relations justifies. The time has fully come when the nations should enter into a solemn obligation to settle their disputes in the great tribunal which they have created; when they should organize for their common interests an international deliberative assembly; when they should agree to deliver themselves from the burdens of competitive arming; when they should neutralize permanently the commerce of the world, and bring international law, in its principles and its mode of administration, into harmony with the advanced judicial systems of the nations. Much of this the Hague Conference will certainly do. That is what it is to meet for. That is what the world will demand of it when it assembles.

The German Election and the Peace Movement.

It is generally supposed that the result of the recent German election has been a decided setback to the cause of peace in Germany. The Reichstag refused to vote the appropriation asked for by the government to continue the military movements in Southwest Africa. Whereupon it was dissolved, and the Emperor appealed to the country. The result of the election was to give a majority of two hundred and twenty members in favor of the government's policy. Thereupon there was great rejoicing in imperial circles, and the impression given out that the colonial policy hitherto pursued had received the overwhelming sanction of the nation.

A. H. Fried, writing in the *Friedenswarte*, shows that the government had no just ground for jubilation. The support of its policy was not due to the popular vote. The number of votes cast for the government was only 4,962,000, while that against it was 5,895,000, or a majority of 933,000 of the votes actually polled. The Social Democrats, whose

seats in the parliament were greatly diminished, not only maintained but actually increased their vote. In the year 1903 they cast 3,010,771 votes; this election they increased the number to 3,258,968, a gain of nearly a quarter of a million.

It is a curious phenomenon of parliamentary government that the parties actually securing nearly a million majority at the polls should find themselves in a helpless minority in the parliament. Mr. Fried says this result is due to the peculiar distribution of the electoral districts and to certain compromises occasioned by party quarrels. He believes it to be fraught with grave danger to the nation.

It would seem, then, that German colonial militarism was actually condemned by the popular vote, and that by a very pronounced majority. That, of course, is a fact which has great significance for the future. The time will come when this popular majority against the direst evil in the nation will become so potent that it cannot be robbed, by political gerrymandering, of its proper place in the national councils.

If is, of course, as Mr. Fried declares, much to be regretted that at the present strategic moment in Europe, when the second peace conference of the nations is about to meet, the election machinery of Germany should have defeated the clearly-expressed will of the people and thrown the control of the parliament and the national policies into the hands of the reactionaries. It puts the German government, in an important sense, out of sympathy with the strong movement, everywhere apparent in Europe, away from the narrow, selfish nationalism, the distrust and hostilities of the past, toward unity of feeling and endeavor. It means for the moment, in Mr. Fried's own words, "increase of uncertainty in this small portion of the earth, new burdens, further suppression of hopes of a higher civilization, further social misery and industrial inferiority." He thinks that the outlook is gloomy for every true German patriot, for those who had looked upon Germany as the centre of crystallization of a European federation.

Outside of Germany, also, the result of the election has brought great disappointment. It means greater difficulty this summer at the Hague Conference in securing the important ends which that meeting ought to give, and will, we believe, give the world.

But conservative reactions have come in other countries, and then the pendulum has swung farther than ever the other way. So will it be in Germany. The friends of true parliamentary government, of the right of the people to control the destinies of the nation, of fellowship with other nations, will rise quickly from this seeming defeat, and we shall yet see the German governmental policies, both at home and abroad, truly representing what we believe to be the mind and heart of the German people.

"The Human Harvest."

In a series of meetings held in the interest of peace, President David Starr Jordan of Leland Stanford, Jr., University recently addressed the California Club on the topic, "The Human Harvest." A correspondent of ours writes us that his speech was one of the most impressive ever heard by the Club.

We can readily understand the interest which President Jordan aroused. Readers of his stimulating book, "The Blood of the Nation," know how vigorously he expounds his theory that war, instead of creating,—as is popularly supposed,—destroys a country's heroes.

To make himself clear, Dr. Jordan used as illustration the development of the celebrated Stanford horses.

"Four well-known laws were observed. First, variation,—that no two living things are exactly alike; second, heredity,—that each generation holds on to the gains of the years before, so that colts inherited qualities developed in their ancestry; third, selection,—that the choice of the best horses as the ones from which to breed would improve the stock; fourth, segregation,—taking care to mate the right ones, and to prevent the mating of others. And through the continued practice of these four principles superior horses were bred. He added that in former years whenever the college needed a new professor a horse was sold off and the proceeds used to supply the needs of the college, the price of a horse and that of a professor being about equal. Dr. Jordan explained that the opposite practice, should it be tried, of sending away the best horses and keeping the inferior stock would result in a degenerate breed."

Applying this theory of selection and heredity to the rise and fall of nations, the lecturer stated that war kills off the strong men—men chosen because they are physically perfect and courageous—and leaves the weak, whose descendants make an inferior race. As Dr. Jordan tells us in his book, "Greece died because the men who made her glory had all passed away and left none of their kin and therefore none of their kind." The men who remained to perpetuate her greatness were for the most part not the sons of her warriors, but the offspring of stable-boys, scullions and slaves, of whom imperial Greece could make no use in her Asiatic wars. Rome fell, not, as we have supposed, because of the luxury, the indolence, and the corruption of her population,—these, of course, caused the downfall of people who were luxurious, indolent and corrupt, and so contributed to the final overthrow of the nation; but, in the words of Seeley, "The Roman Empire perished for want of men," or, as Professor Seeck, author of the "Downfall of the Ancient World," says, the fall of Rome was due to the "extinction of the best." Roman histories furnish us with evidence of this truth by giving us endless details of wars. Both the aristocrat and the democrat perished by the sword in the civil wars. The small